



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
*Aging and Long-Term Support Administration*  
*PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600*

April 6, 2023  
**AMENDED APRIL 12, 2023**

**AL TSA: AFH #2023-014**  
**FOOD HANDLER REQUIREMENTS FOR ADULT FAMILY HOMES**

Dear Adult Family Home Provider:

**This letter is amended to clarify that the .5 CE requirements do not apply to all long-term care workers.**

In 2020, a change to WAC [388-112A-0610\(f\)](#) removed the requirement for most long-term care workers who do not have a current food handler permit to complete continuing education of .5 hours annually. The change narrowed the CE requirement to a small subset of long-term care workers hired before 2005. However, RCS is continuing to follow the statutory requirements in [RCW 70.128.250](#), which are:

- Long-term care workers who don't hold an active food handler's permit must take .5 CE hours annually to maintain food handling and safety training.
- The AFH must provide information or training regarding safe food handling practices to long-term care workers hired after 2005 who do not hold a food handlers permit. The training must occur prior to the staff handling food or providing food service in the AFH.

Long-term care workers hired before 2005 may either maintain an active food handler permit OR take the annual .5 CE to maintain their training.

**Since resuming licensing inspections, RCS is again verifying the .5-hour safe food handling CE for long-term care staff who do not hold a food handler permit. RCS is also verifying documentation of the AFH-provided safe food handling practices training or information for those hired after June 30, 2005.**

As a reminder, the training, certification, and CE timelines were waived through emergency rules in response to the COVID pandemic. The adjusted timelines are reflected below:

- Long-term care workers have until August 31, 2023, to complete any CE that came due between March 1, 2020, and August 31, 2023.
- Long-term care workers who are not yet certified as Home Care Aides (HCAs) are not required to meet their CE requirements until after they are certified.
- Food Safety training was waived from 03/16/20-10/27/22. The food safety training requirement went back into effect 10/27/22.

If you have any questions, please contact Colleen Jensen, Policy Program Manager, at (564) 999-3182 or [colleen.jensen1@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:colleen.jensen1@dshs.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

Amy Abbott, Director  
Residential Care Services

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